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## BY MEAD AND STREAM

A STORY.

BY CHARLES GIBBON,

AUTHOR OF 'ROBIN GRAY,' 'QUEEN OF THE MEADOW,' 'THE GOLDEN SHAFT,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.—THE OVERTURE: 'MUCH VIRTUE IN IF.'

THE sun still bright on the hilltop; figures rising to its crest, and there halting, with hands shading their eyes, to take a glad or sad look backward. Then, impelled by the master Time, they move downward through deepening shades to join the great crowd in the bosky glen at the foot of the mountain. Mingling in the crowd, they become themselves shadows, making strange shapes in the beautiful garden ground where they find rest.

But in that pause on the bright hilltop, in that look back along the slope which has been climbed, there falls a mist from the eyes. There is the straight easy road up to the height which we might have taken, and there are the devious paths like the mazy involutions of the lines on a railway map, which we have taken, and which have made the journey appear so wearisome to many, so short to the happy few.

But all see what a much pleasanter road they could travel if they might only start afresh with this new vision.

Old friends meet and exchange compliments about birthdays—some accepting them contentedly, others regarding them as grim jokes which would be honoured in the omission. But gay or sad, every one has in the heart a plaintive note which sounds that monosyllable 'IF!'

'If I had only been advised at the right moment, how different it would be with me now,' sighs the pallid invalid, closing his eyes in vain and trying to forget.

Then the sad-faced maiden:

'If he had only trusted me a little more—if I had only doubted him a little less, how sweet

it would have been to have gone down this hill-side hand in hand together.'

'If I could only have persuaded him not to make that last journey,' murmurs the widow.

'If my son had been spared,' moans the childless.

'If I had known his falsehood,' bitterly exclaims the betrayed.

'I wish the gov'nor's cash had not gone so fast,' mutters the spendthrift, 'and it might have lasted long enough to have made this an easy slide, if I had only thought about it. Now I suppose it will be a regular plunge.'

'If I had only left off play before my luck turned,' growls the gambler.

'If I had left those shares alone I would have been all right,' says the bankrupt.

'Looking back, sir, is seldom pleasant,' says the successful man with a complacent smile and with a wave of his hand patronising the whole past, 'but to me it is agreeable enough. The struggle was hard, sir, hard; and if it had not been for untiring energy on my part—well, I should not be where I am. But if I had it all to do over again, why, I could double my fortune.'

But he is content enough to go gently down the slope in his carriage, whilst others are tumbling or creeping down the same course bearing that burden 'If.' The miserable ones know that their state would have been more gracious if they could have seen the way more clearly; but they have no wish to go back; they crawl voiceless over the hilltop, in haste to reach the end of the journey.

'Cheated of my due,' the man of ambition cries; 'but if there had been a fair field for me I would have accomplished all my aims, and the world would have been the gainer.'

'Let us walk steadily on,' says the philosopher gently, 'and our memories of the sunlit streaks on the other side will cheer us on our way downward. There is no life that has not some pleasant memory that will bring a sense of happiness to the most desolate—if it be not thrust aside by vain repining. All men and women may be happy, if'—

Oh, that infinite 'If!'

#### CHAPTER II.—WHAT MIGHT BE.

The place was the garden of Willowmere. The time was the middle of August, when trees and fields and bracken were faltering into that full ripeness which bodes decay. At that period, note the gradation of hues in the forest land—from deep watery green to pale, sensitive yellow, every leaf trembling in the sunlight with ever-changing shades. In the garden the forward apples were showing ruddy cheeks, and the late pear presented a sullen gray green.

The persons were Madge Heathcote, niece of Richard Crawshaw, the sturdy yeoman farmer of Willowmere, and Philip Hadleigh, son of the master of Ringsford Manor.

She was somewhat pale and anxious: he was inclined to hustle her anxiety aside with the blissful hopefulness of youth and indifference to consequences.

'I am going to give you very bad advice, Madge; will you listen to it?'

'Is it very bad?' she asked, lifting her eyes, in which there was an expression curiously compounded of pathos and coquetry.

'Very bad indeed,' he responded cheerfully, 'for I am going to tell you that you are not to mind your uncle at all, but be guided by me now, as you will be, I hope, at no very distant date.'

'But you know he always liked you, Philip, and you must have done something—something awfully bad to have made him turn so suddenly against you.'

But although she tried to make him believe that she was quite sure he had done something very wicked, she somehow failed to impress the youth with any deep sense of her indignation.

'I cannot measure the degree of my iniquity until you give me some hint as to what it is.'

'Don't you know?'

'On my honour I do not. My conscience is as clear of it as your own. Now speak—tell me my crime.'

'If you don't know what it is,' she said slowly, whilst she studied intently a weed that had grown in the path and which now sprouted at her restless foot. 'If you really don't know what it is—I think we had better say nothing about it.'

'Very well and with all my heart. Still I can't help thinking that your uncle might have come to me, or allowed me to go to him, before he made up his mind that we should never pull together.'

'He did not say that exactly'—

'Would you have believed him if he had?' he interrupted, with an under-current of laughter in his voice and yet with a shade of curiosity in his expression.

She looked at him. That was enough. The pale blue eyes, which seemed in extreme lights quite gray, had that wistful, trustful expression of a dog when being chidden by a loved master for some offence of which it is innocent. But presently the expression changed to one of thoughtfulness, the flush faded from her cheek, and she again sought inspiration from the weed at her foot.

'How can I tell you what I might believe about the future? All that I know is—I trust you, and am content'—

'That's my Madge,' he said in a low glad tone, as he clasped her hand.

'At the same time,' she went on gravely, 'you must remember that Uncle Dick has not only been good and kind to me; but he has, besides, shown himself wise in the advice he has given to others, and it would be very wrong of me not to think seriously over anything he may counsel about my future.'

'Now you are playing Miss Prim, and I don't admire you in that character. I like your uncle and respect his judgment—except of course in the present instance'—Then, suddenly checking himself: 'But what *did* he say?'

'Not very much, but he was in earnest. He told me that if I cared for myself or cared for him, I was to have nothing more to do with any of the Ringsford Manor people.'

'That was when he came home from the market yesterday?'

'Yes—but you must not think'—

'No, no—I was not suspecting him of having stayed too long at the *King's Head*, although I daresay he might not be so cool as when he started in the morning. I know that he would be out of humour with our people, for he had some dispute with my father, old Cone tells me. Whether it was about the price of corn, or a pig, or the points of a horse, is known only to themselves, but they parted in a bad temper. You will see that your uncle will not bear me malice on that account. Did he say anything else?'

'Yes.' Her lips trembled a little and she did not seem disposed to continue.

'Well, out with it,' he exclaimed cheerfully.

'He said—that—he wished he saw you fairly off on your wildgoose chase.'

Philip understood now why the lips had trembled and why the words came from her lips with so much effort.

'Poor Madge,' he said gently as he drew her arm under his own and patted the hand which rested on his wrist.

Then they walked together in silence.

He was a broad-shouldered, stalwart fellow, with short, curly, brown hair, a moustache of darker hue; chin and cheeks bare. His was a frank, sanguine face—Hope flashing from the clear eyes and brightening all the features. The square brow, the well-defined lines of nose and jaws, were suggestive of firmness; the soft curves of mouth and chin dispelled all hints of hardness in the character. A resolute but not an obdurate man, one might say.

She was tall and graceful, age between twenty-three and twenty-five, but in certain moods she appeared to be much older; and in others no one would have thought that she was quite out of her teens. Long regular features; silken hair that had once been very fair but had darkened as she grew in years; a quiet, self-possessed manner which made all comers easy in her presence, instantly inspiring confidence and respect. Some people said she had more influence over the labourers in the parish than the parson himself. The parson's wife—although a kindly woman in her way—never had anything like the success of 'Missie' Heathcote, as she was affectionately called by the working-folk, in persuading Hodge to give up his extra pot of a Saturday and inducing Hodge's 'old woman' to keep her cottage and her children neat.

To Philip Hadleigh in his calmest ravings about her she was the most beautiful creature in all woman-nature. He had learned Wordsworth's lines about the 'noble woman nobly planned' who was yet 'not too bright or good for human nature's daily food,' and he was never tired of repeating them to himself. They presented a perfect portrait of Madge. She, too, was beautiful in mind and body—true, earnest, devoted. She would die for the man she loved; she could never be false to him. And he had won that love! He did not know how, or why or when. He was dazed by his great fortune. He could not realise it; so he shut his eyes and was happy.

But 'Missie' Heathcote herself knew that she was capable of saying and doing very foolish things. She feared that she was capable of hate as passionate and fierce as her love.

So far all had gone smoothly with them. True, their engagement was between themselves; there had been no formal asking of the sanction of her uncle and guardian's leave, or of his father's approval. But everybody knew what had been going on and no objection had been raised. In his easy way Philip took for granted that those who had any right to their confidence understood everything and did not require him to go through the conventional explanations. She had not considered explanations necessary until they should come to the arrangements for the wedding-day.

Their elders did understand: Mr Hadleigh of Ringsford was indifferent or too proud to proffer even to his son advice which was not asked: Crawshaw of Willowmere was content to let Madge please herself. He thought her choice a good one, for he liked Philip and believed in him. Of course in the way of money and position she might have done better. (Was there ever a parent or guardian of a girl who did not think that 'she might have done better?') Hadleigh was a wealthy man, but his ownership of Ringsford was of recent date, and although he was doing everything in his power to secure recognition as one of the county families, all his riches could not place him on a level with Dick Crawshaw, whose ancestors had been masters of Willowmere from a period before the arrival of the Conqueror—going back to the time of the Romans, as was sometimes asserted.

Crawshaw was not a man of prejudice when he considered things calmly. So, in this matter of his niece's choice of a partner, he was content since she was satisfied.

In this way it happened that the heads of the houses had given no formal consent to the proposed marriage; and now that a quarrel had arisen, each felt free to approve or disapprove of it in accordance with his own humour.

Madge regarded the quarrel—as she was inclined to regard most matters—with serious eyes. Philip was convinced that it was nothing more than a petty squabble—a few angry words spoken in a moment of temper, which both men were no doubt ashamed of and would be glad to have forgotten. He was not disturbed about that unpleasant little event.

What elicited that sympathetic whisper 'Poor Madge'—and what had kept them silent so long as they passed down by the dense old hawthorn hedge to the orchard, was a matter of much more importance than the falling-out of their elders. At length, he continued:

'Would you like me to give up this business of mine altogether? . . . We can do without it.'

'No; I should not like that at all,' she answered with prompt decision. 'You believe the result will be of great advantage to your father's firm and to yourself; the experience will certainly be valuable to you; and when you come home again!'

'Ah, when I come home again—that will be a glad day,' he said with subdued enthusiasm. 'Let me take up the picture where you laid down the brush. . . . When I come home again there will be a little conversation with the vicar. Then two young people—just like you and me, Madge—will march into the church on a week-day. The parson will be there and a few friends will be there, and we shall all be very merry. Next will come a sweet month when these selfish young people will hide themselves away from all the world in some out-of-the-way nook, where they will make a joyful world of their own in being together, knowing that only death is to part them now. Won't that be good fun? Do you think you will like it?'

'I think so,' she answered, smiling at his fancy and blushing a little at the happy prospect.

'Next they return to their cottage by the wood; and the lady is busy with her housekeeping, and the man is busy admiring her more and more every day, finding new beauty in her face, new love in her heart as the years go on. They will not be always alone, perhaps; and when they are old she will be a sweet-faced dame with beautiful white hair, and there will be strong young arms for her to lean upon as she goes to church on Sunday. The old man will totter by her side, resting on his staff, and still her lover—her lover till death do them part. . . . What do you say to that fine forecast?'

'Ay—if it might be, Philip,' she said with a bright smile—a hint of tears in its brightness, for she had followed his vision of the future with tender sympathy throughout.

'Will you try to make it what I have so often dreamed it may be, should be—must be?'

'I will try.'

His arm was round her waist: they were sheltered by the apple-trees and the great hedge: he kissed her.

'Then that's all right,' was his glad comment; 'and now I am going to hunt for Uncle Dick,

and have it out with him for playing such a wicked joke upon us. I won't say good-bye, for I shall be coming back with him. I don't think I shall say good-bye until— Why are you so troubled about this trip, Madge? It is really nothing more than a trip, and there is still time enough to give it up altogether.'

'You are not to speak of that again,' she replied with playful reproach. 'It was your mother's wish.'

'So be it. But here's a new idea!'

'Are you sure it is new?'

'Quite. Suppose we pay that visit to the church before I start, and then we could travel together? That would be capital.'

She shook her head.

'You know it would never do. You would either neglect the purpose of your journey, or neglect *me*—and that would be a terrible crime!'

'I am not likely to commit it, and if I did you would forgive me.'

They had reached the stile at the end of the orchard, and he vaulted over it. His foot slipped as he descended, but he saved himself from falling by clutching the top bar of the stile.

'That is not a good omen,' said Madge, laughing gently; 'you ought to have been content to clamber over like other people.'

#### MONASTIC ENGLAND.

A TRAVELLER, visiting any of the monastic ruins which adorn the loveliest of our valleys, cannot but be impressed by the changes time works on institutions and systems. These piles, stately in their desolation, remain as landmarks of a system, which, after holding away for centuries, was suddenly swept away. Like all social institutions, the monastic orders supplied a public want, and when it was no longer needed, the system disappeared. Many institutions, after having fulfilled their purpose, develop into abuses, and so to some extent counteract the good effect they had formerly produced, and this doubtless applies to the case of the monasteries. The noble architecture and great extent of these ruins show us the skill and enthusiasm displayed by the early workers of these orders; their utter ruin, while it has made the whole appear more picturesque, shows the inevitable end of institutions which outlive their usefulness.

As long ago as the fifth century, it was the custom for devout men to form themselves into societies, apart from the world, that their lives might be untainted by its evil influences. The leader in this movement was St Benedict, an Italian monk, whose followers, naming themselves after him, gave to their order the name of Benedictines. These men, spreading themselves over France and England, were the pioneers of the later monastic orders. They lived in the most extreme poverty, choosing the most forsaken and barren regions for their homes. Thus, we find them in the days of the Saxon, founding in a marsh beside the Thames the abbey of Westminster; in the district of the Fens the abbey of Crowland; in the swamps of the west the abbey of Glastonbury; whilst farther north, on wild headlands overlooking the North Sea, rose the abbeys of Whitby and Lindisfarne. But our

knowledge of the life passed by the inmates of these sanctuaries is extremely scanty. The times were too turbulent to allow the monks much time for study, and although Cædmon and Bede have left glimpses of this age in which they lived, their scanty records are only as flashes in the darkness. The Danes harassed the land incessantly; and the monasteries, as representing a religion they hated, were with them especial objects of attack. Crowland Abbey was given to the flames, and the abbeys of Whitby, Lindisfarne, and Tynemouth were sacked and destroyed.

After the Conquest, the Norman abbots gave a new energy to a system which was becoming somewhat stagnant, and by the twelfth century, this new impetus had reached its climax. Then rose the monasteries whose ruins make Yorkshire scenery doubly attractive. The abbeys of Fountains, Bolton, Rievaulx, and Kirkstall, were all commenced in this period, amid surroundings far different from those which make these districts so attractive to the modern traveller. One consideration in choosing the site of the abbey is worth notice. It was always near to a running stream, from which the brethren might obtain their supplies of fish. Thus, we never think of Bolton Abbey without the Wharfe, or of Melrose without the Tweed.

In every monastic establishment, the principal feature was the abbey, or chapel, consisting of nave, chancel, and transepts, built on the plan of a cross. Here, the monks assembled for prayers, which seem to have been of such wearisome length that artificial means were invented to counteract their soporific effect. In the chancel of Westminster Abbey may be seen the seats ingeniously contrived to throw on to the floor any monk who allowed himself to be overcome by the monotonous routine of prayers. Adjoining the abbey was the chapter-house, where the abbots from the neighbouring monasteries formed a chapter to discuss matters of church interest, and to sit in judgment on those of their brethren who had transgressed. And although it is well known that the origin of the dispute between Becket and the king was the leniency shown by these chapters to their own priesthood, when the plaintiff was a layman, yet in cases where the interests of the church were at stake, these priestly judges did not hesitate to inflict even death itself on the delinquent. Readers of *Marmion* will be reminded of the fate of Constance; and the discovery within recent times of a skeleton immured in a vault of Coldingham Abbey in Berwickshire, may perhaps serve to suggest that this was not an uncommon method of inflicting death.

The refectory, which in many ruins shows least signs of decay, corresponded to the modern dining-hall, and was often a noble and spacious apartment. But the most important of the abbey buildings, in our eyes, was the Scriptorium—the abbey library and study. Here were preserved and copied the writings of the times, and the greater part of our history, prior to the sixteenth century, is owing to the work of these priestly scribes.

The monks formed independent colonies, asking, and indeed needing, no help from the world around them. At first, their lands in many instances were small in extent, and their poverty was amply sufficient to deter any but devout



men from casting in his lot with them. Poverty and work they considered the two great antidotes against sin. Even in those early times, they were fully acquainted with the adage which connects mischief with idle hands. Their employments were as various as their tastes. The building of the abbey must have furnished employment for several generations of monks. The stained-glass windows and the bells of their churches were their own handiwork. Visitors to the Patent Museum at South Kensington are attracted by the loud ticking of a clock, still said to be a capital timekeeper, although the three centuries of its infancy were passed in measuring time for its makers, the monks of Glastonbury. As further instances of the versatile occupations of the monks, it will be remembered that Roger Bacon, the inventor of the common lens, was a Franciscan. Gardening, too, occupied much of their time, and we even read of Becket and his monks tossing hay in the harvest-field.

But as time went on, the abbey lands became extensive, by the grants of men who thought to compensate for their misdeeds by becoming liberal in their dying hours to mother-church. In the course of time, the abbots had become in reality great landowners, and monks only in name. From a glimpse left us of the state of affairs round the abbey of St Edmonsbury, it is plain that the abbot was held more in awe by the surrounding tenantry than the king himself. The abbot of Furness was virtual lord over the country north of Morecambe Bay from the Duddon to Windermere; and the estate of the abbey of Fountains stretched to the foot of Penygant, a distance of thirty miles.

As numerous instances have shown, wealth is a power, which, if not wisely used, may not only demoralise individuals, but communities and nations. The abbots, whose walls had been raised to encircle piety and poverty, became in time the abodes of indolence and luxury. Indeed, it is probable that the scanty knowledge we possess of our country's history during the two centuries prior to the destruction of the monasteries, is owing to the fact that the monks, who had formerly been our chief historians, had thrown aside a task which few others were then competent to take up. The new learning, which carried knowledge outside the monasteries, had not yet sprung into being, and the only learned sect in the land had become idle.

The monastic system, had it been allowed to live on, would certainly have met with a severe check, if not destruction, in the religious reforms which took place in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth. As it was, the end came before its time, and like all premature reforms, the dissolution clashed with the spirit of the age, and was regarded by the common people as an injustice. The monks had never driven hard bargains with their tenants, and their popularity as landlords was great. Even when their dissolution was discussed in parliament, the members showed themselves averse to extreme measures, and compromised the matter by striking at the smaller monasteries only. But the insurrection known as the Pilgrimage of Grace soon gave Henry VIII. a pretext for their total suppression, and in 1539, the work of dissolution was finished in a most ruthless manner. The abbots of Fountains

and Jorvaulx were hanged together at Tyburn, and the abbot of Glastonbury shared the same fate. The abbot of Furness, to escape death, was compelled to sign a deed conveying his whole estate to the king.

The abbots were for the most part despoiled by the people of the district. A stained-glass window of Furness Abbey was carried off to adorn Bowness Church, on the banks of Windermere. An oriel window from Glastonbury Abbey was used in the building of a neighbouring inn; whilst the houses of the village owed great part of their building materials to the destruction of this noble church. In the case of Crowland, the abbey seems to have suffered little until the time of the Civil War, when a band of the Parliament army destroyed it, after using it as a shelter. In those instances where man has not wreaked his vengeance, time and the elements have effected a slow but sure ruin.

Such was the sudden collapse of these powerful and at one time useful institutions. Whatever may have been the faults and drawbacks of their later existence, they were in earlier periods of immense service to the country, as they conserved within them all that was best and highest in literature, arts, and civilisation. They kept the lamp of knowledge burning throughout the dark ages, ready for a time when its light could be more generally diffused among the nations. And one thing they did which ought to be held in grateful remembrance: they were the chief promoters of the abolition of serfdom, and the manumission of the slaves, both in England and Scotland. When giving the rites of the church to the dying landowner, the monks, although anxious for their own share of his property, never forgot to plead for the slaves. And so it came about that, by the close of the fifteenth century, slavery was virtually abolished, not by Act of Parliament, but by the monastic Orders.

## TWO DAYS IN A LIFETIME.

A STORY IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

BY T. W. SPEIGHT.

### CHAPTER I.

ON a certain sunny morning in the pleasant month of June, in a pleasant room, the French-windows of which opened on to a terraced garden, with the gleaming waters of the Channel heaving and falling no great distance away, sat Mrs Bowood, wife of Captain James Bowood—formerly of the mercantile marine, but now of Rosemount, The Undercliff, Isle of Wight—busily engaged with her correspondence. Mrs Bowood was a pleasant-looking woman of some forty summers, whose brown hair was already tinged with gray. She had never been accounted a beauty, and she made no pretensions to a gift with which nature had failed to endow her. But her dark eyes looked the home of kindness and good temper, with now and then a glint of merry humour breaking through them; and she possessed the gift—so precious in a woman—of a voice at once soft, clear, and persuasive. The verdict of every one who knew Mrs Bowood was, that the more you saw of her the better you grew to like her.

All women, whether married or single, like to have one particular friend to whom they can open their minds without fearing that their confidence will be betrayed, to whom they can tell things that they will tell to no one else, not even to their husbands. Mrs Bowood's particular friend and confidante was a certain Miss Dorothea Pennell, who, being a lifelong invalid, and consequently debarred from playing any active part on the world's stage, welcomed all the more eagerly every scrap of news which her correspondent could send her, and responded all the more sympathetically, whenever sympathy was looked for at her hands. It was to Miss Pennell that Mrs Bowood was this morning inditing her fortnightly budget of news. As she turns over the first page and begins on the second, let us take the liberty of peeping over her shoulder and of reading what her pen puts down.

'We are rather more than usually lively at Rosemount just now,' she writes; 'in fact, I should be justified in saying that we are decidedly uproarious. You will know, my dear Dolly, what I mean when I tell you that my sister's two youngsters, Freddy and Lucy, are here on a visit. Maria wanted to go to Paris for a few weeks, so I gladly offered to take charge of them. Their sweet childish laughter makes pleasant music in the old house. I know I shall have a good cry to myself when the time comes for them to leave us. They are at once the pride and the torment of their uncle. You know that my dear old Bow-wow has a fine natural irritability of temper, which really means nothing when you come to know him, and is merely a sort of safety-valve which, I verily believe, saves him from many a fit of gout. So, when the youngsters steal his pocket-handkerchief or hide his spectacles, he stamps—not with his gouty foot—and storms, and his red face grows redder—which is quite unnecessary—and he threatens condign punishment. Then the children pretend to be frightened, and hide themselves for a quarter of an hour; after which they go hand in hand and stand a little distance away from him and rub a knuckle in a corner of their eyes. Then of course they are called up, scolded for half a minute, and forgiven. Then come lollipops. But all the time I feel sure that the young monkeys are laughing at him in their sleeves. Dear old Jamie! he is as transparent as a sheet of glass, and the children's sharp eyes read him through and through.

'The other day they found a quantity of coloured paper, which they persuaded Biggles, their nurse-maid, to cut up and fashion into so-called "roses." Of these paper flowers they made festoons, with which they decorated themselves; but by-and-by, seeing their uncle's white hat on the table in the hall, the temptation was too much for them, and forthwith the *chapeau* was decorated with a wreath of paper flowers. Then the young imps hid behind the half-open library door, waiting till their uncle should set out for his afternoon stroll, about which he is generally as regular as clock-work. Presently, out he came, humming some old sea-song to himself, and took his cane out of the stand and clapped his hat on his head, never perceiving—you know how short-sighted he is—that there was anything amiss with the latter article, and so went his way; and very comical

he must have looked. As soon as he had disappeared, the children came out of their hiding-place and performed a war-dance on the veranda. Meanwhile, my dear old boy marched gaily on his way towards Ventnor. He told me afterwards that he could not make out why people turned and stared so at him. Before long, he had quite a gathering of urchins of both sexes following at his heels—but at a respectful distance, having probably the fear of his cane in their eyes. Then a butcher's boy, as he drove past, called out: "Hi! Bill, here's another guy!" This bewildered the Captain. He turned and glared at his following, and examined his coat-tails, for fear anything might have been pinned surreptitiously behind him; but he never thought of looking at his hat. It was not till he reached the outskirts of the town that some one who knew him stopped him and told him what was the matter. He came back in a great fume, on castigatory thoughts intent; but of course the culprits were not to be found, nor did they venture to put in an appearance till bedtime, when they sneaked up-stairs under the wing of Biggles, without venturing into the drawing-room to bid either their uncle or me their usual "good-night." After this, you will perhaps be surprised to learn that on peeping into the children's room about half-past nine, I found the candles alight, the urchins sitting up in their beds, and their uncle seated on a chair between the two, telling them a sea-yarn and stuffing them with chocolate creams. What is a poor woman to do with such a husband?

'And this reminds me that I have promised my sister to engage a French governess for her while she is away. Maria has a charming knack of throwing on to other people's shoulders any little worry which she does not care to encounter herself. What would seem more natural and proper than that she, whose home is in London, should engage a governess on the spot. But, no; she did not care to face the nuisance of having to pick and select from among a score or two of candidates, and so delegated the labour to me, who live here in this out-of-the-way spot. "You know, dear Caroline, that I lack your firmness in matters of this sort," she wrote in that insinuating way of hers. "I cannot deal with people as you can. I am impulsive; you are just the opposite. I should inevitably engage the first applicant whose appearance pleased me, without reference to her abilities or anything else; while you, dear Caroline!"— And so on. You know Maria's style.

'As a consequence of my advertisement, I have been inundated with letters during the last week—the postman will want an extra half-crown at Christmas—all of which I have had to wade through; the result being that I have selected half-a-dozen of the most likely candidates to see personally. I fervently hope that I shall be able to find one out of the half-dozen that will meet Maria's requirements, and so bring this troublesome business to an end.

'The day after I posted my last letter to you, Elsie Brandon came to us on a visit. You will remember her as being at Rosemount when you were staying with us last summer. She has shot up wonderfully in the interim. She is now seventeen, and is nearly as tall as I am. You

will remember my telling you that she is a ward in Chancery, and that she will come into a considerable fortune when she is of age. Her aunt, Miss Hoskyns, who has charge of her, brought her to Rosemount to stay for a couple of months. She is a bright intelligent girl, full of life and high spirits when away from her severely methodical aunt. Miss Hoskyns—whose dearest wish it is to be looked upon as a *femme savante*, and who has just started for Italy to decipher some Etruscan inscriptions which have lately been unearthed there—would fain train up Elsie to eschew all thoughts of matrimony, and develop gradually into a blue-stocking like herself. The child is learning Latin and mathematics, and is to begin Greek next winter, and by-and-by go to Girton College for a couple of years. But I am afraid that all Miss Hoskyns' well-meant efforts will never make a "girl graduate" of Elsie Brandon. Far dearer to her heart than Latin or mathematics is a game of lawn-tennis on a sunny afternoon; and young as she is—unless an old woman is mistaken—she already knows more of the art of flirtation than she is likely to know of the Greek poets as long as she lives. Meanwhile, a little gentle repression will do her no harm. I equalise matters by insisting that her studies shall not be neglected—the Rev. Septimus Dale comes and coaches her three times a week—but when once her lessons have been mastered, she is at liberty to do as she likes. I need scarcely say that she twists Captain James Bowood round her little finger.

'Now that I have written so much about Elsie, it seems only natural that I should tell you the latest news about the Captain's nephew, Charley Summers, who was such a favourite with you when you were here. You know already how he ran through the small fortune which came to him after his mother's death; and how, subsequent to that, his uncle paid his debts twice over. You know also how, as a last resource, the Captain placed him in a tea-broker's office in the City, and how, after a three months' trial of office-life, he broke away from it, and took to the stage for a living. This was the last straw; and when James heard that his nephew had turned actor, he vowed that he should never darken his doors again, and that he washed his hands of him for ever. My dear husband had certain prejudices instilled into his mind when he was young, and there they live and flourish to the present day. It is his firm belief that in earning his bread as he does at present, Charley has irrevocably disgraced both himself and his family. And yet, for all that, he still holds the boy as the apple of his eye. Love and prejudice have been fighting against each other in his heart, and for the present, prejudice has carried the day; but if I know anything of my husband, the victory is only a temporary one. Love will conquer in the end.

'This preamble brings me to the particular scrap of news anent Charley which I wanted to tell you. On taking up the local paper yesterday morning, I happened to notice the advertisement of a travelling company who are going to play at the Ryde Theatre during the whole of this week. Among the list of names mentioned I found that of Charles Warden—our scapegrace's *nom de théâtre*. This at once set me wondering

whether, now that he is so close to us, he would venture to come over to Rosemount, in defiance of his uncle's express prohibition. I confess that I should greatly like to see the boy, and yet it would certainly be better that he should not venture here for a considerable time to come.

'But there is another point in connection with Charley about which I am more curious and anxious. Do you know, Dolly, I almost fancy that there is something going on between him and Elsie? "How absurd!" you will probably say to yourself. "Why, the girl is only seventeen."—True; but girls of seventeen are often engaged nowadays, and married before they are eighteen. We live in a precocious age.

'While Elsie was at Rosemount last year, Charley came down and stayed a fortnight with us; it was his last visit before he got into disgrace. He and Elsie gravitated naturally towards each other, as young people will do. They were out and about a great deal together, and were sometimes missing from breakfast till dinner-time. I thought nothing of it at the time, looking upon Elsie as little more than a child, whereas Charley was already turned twenty-one. But I was certainly a little surprised when, in the course of conversation a few days ago, Elsie let out the fact that Master Charles had visited at her aunt's house several times during the course of the last winter. By what occult means he contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of that she-dragon, Miss Hoskyns, is more than I can imagine. He must have found out one of her weak points, for she is very vain in many ways, and have played upon it to serve his own ends. I know Charley too well to believe that he would care to visit Miss Hoskyns out of regard for that lady herself. Could it be because he thought there might be a chance of now and then seeing Elsie, that he put himself to so much trouble? That there is some secret understanding between these young people, I am pretty well convinced; and as an additional proof of the fact, I may tell you that when I pointed out Charley's name in the newspaper to Elsie, her eyes flashed out suddenly, while the wild-rose tints in her cheeks grew deeper and richer. I had never seen the child look so pretty before.

'So, then, here is the first chapter of a little romance working itself out. Should the opportunity be given me of watching its progress, you shall hear all about it in due time.'

As already stated, the French-windows of the room in which Mrs Bowood was writing stood wide open this sunny morning. Mrs Bowood had heard no sound, had seen no shadow; but while she was writing the last few words, there suddenly came over her a feeling that she was no longer alone. She looked up, and could not help giving a little start when she saw a tall figure dressed in black standing close to the open window. Next moment, she smiled to herself and gave vent to a little sigh. 'Another applicant for the post of French governess,' she murmured. 'How tiresome to be interrupted in the midst of one's correspondence! I will never undertake another commission for Maria as long as I live.'

Seeing Mrs Bowood looking at her inquiringly,



the woman came a step or two nearer, and then paused, as if in doubt. 'What shall I say?—how introduce myself?' she muttered under her breath.

She was tall, and with a sort of easy gracefulness about her which was evidently not acquired, but natural. It was difficult to guess her age, seeing that her face, nearly down to her mouth, was hidden by a veil, which was drawn tightly back over her bonnet, and tied in a knot behind. But the veil could not quite hide two flashing black eyes. She was dressed entirely in black; not a scrap of any other colour being visible anywhere about her.

'You have come in answer to the advertisement?' queried Mrs Bowood.

'The advertisement, madame?' replied the stranger with evident surprise, as she came a step or two nearer. She spoke with a slight foreign accent, which only served to confirm Mrs Bowood's first impression.

'I mean for the French governess's place,' continued the latter lady.

The stranger looked at Mrs Bowood for a moment without speaking; then she said: 'Ah—oui, madame, as you say.' Then she smiled, showing as she did so a very white and perfect set of teeth.

'I am afraid that I shall not be able to attend to you for about half an hour,' said Mrs Bowood in a tone that was half apologetic. 'Perhaps you won't mind waiting as long as that?'

'I am at madame's convenience. I am in no hurry at all. With madame's permission, I will promenade myself in the garden, and amuse myself with looking at the beautiful flowers.'

'Do so, by all means. I will send a servant to tell you when I am ready to see you.'

'Merci, madame.' The stranger in black bowed gracefully, deferentially even, and smiled again. Then taking up the skirt of her dress with one hand, she passed out through the French-window. She paused for a moment in the veranda to put up her black sunshade, and then she passed slowly out of sight. But as she walked she communed with herself: 'This is fortunate—this will give me time. I must find some of the servants, and ask them to direct me. A great deal may be done in half an hour.'

Left alone, Mrs Bowood took up her pen and dipped it in the inkstand. 'Really, many of these foreigners have very nice manners,' she mused. 'We have much to learn from them—not only in manners, but in the art of dress. That young person's gown is made of quite ordinary material; but the style and fit are enough to make poor Madame Smithson die of despair.' Then she took another dip and addressed herself to the continuation of her letter.

'I have a long budget of news for you this week, my dear Dolly, and as yet, have by no means come to the end of it.

'In our many conversations together, I think you must more than once have heard me mention Laura Dimsdale's name, although you may possibly have forgotten the fact. Well, she has been staying at Rosemount for the last ten days. But in order that you may better understand the position of affairs, I will give you a brief résumé of her history.

'You know, of course, that my father was a country doctor, and that after my mother's death I kept his house for many years. When I first knew Laura Langton—that was her name before her marriage—she was a girl of ten, home for her holidays. Her father was vicar of the parish, and he and my father were well acquainted. Well, years went on, and Laura grew up into a very charming young woman. Although there was quite ten years' difference in our ages, she and I were always the best of friends; and whenever she was at home, I used to have a good deal of her company. But by-and-by her school-days were over; and as she was like me, without a mother, she thought that she could not do better than follow my example, and become her father's housekeeper. Soon after this took place, my father's death sent me abroad into the world, and I left Chilwood for ever. But during the last summer I lived there, a certain Sir Frederick Pinkerton, a man about forty years old, used frequently to ride over to the vicarage—he was on a visit at some country-house in the neighbourhood—and village gossip would have it that he was in love with my pretty Laura. But if such were the case, nothing ever came of the affair. By-and-by, Sir Frederick went his way, and was no more seen in those parts.

'Some two or three years later, I heard that Laura was married, and that her husband was Sir Thomas Dimsdale, a wealthy London merchant, forty years older than herself. I said to myself, when I heard the news, that I never could have believed Laura would have married merely for money or position. Later on, I heard the explanation. It appears that her father had been deluded into mixing himself up with certain speculations which were to make a rich man of him, and enable him to leave his daughter a big fortune; but instead of doing that, they simply ruined him. In this crisis, Sir Thomas came to the help of the ruined man. The vicar was extricated from his difficulties, and his daughter became Lady Dimsdale. Such bargains are by no means uncommon in society.

'Sir Thomas died two years ago; and Laura found herself a widow at thirty-three years of age, with an income of something between three and four thousand pounds a year. So far so good. But note the sequel. Should Laura marry again, her income goes from her, all but about four hundred a year. What a poor contemptible creature this Sir Thomas must have been!

'Whether Laura will ever marry again, is of course more than I can say. I hope with all my heart that she may do, and this time for love. She was a very pretty girl, and she is now a very charming woman, and still very youthful-looking. And then, too, her life is a very lonely one. She has no children; her father died years ago; and she has no near relations left alive. For all she is so rich, she is by no means a happy woman.

'I have made mention of a Sir Frederick Pinkerton. Would it surprise you to hear that the individual in question is a neighbour of ours, and a not unfrequent visitor at Rosemount? He has taken a house at Bonchurch for a year, on the recommendation of his doctor. It seems that he and Captain Bowood met somewhere abroad; and they have now renewed their acquaintance.



Sir Frederick is a bachelor, on the wrong side of fifty, I should imagine, but young-looking for his years. He is said to be very rich; but he has also the reputation of being very stingy. He comes of a very old family, and is a thorough man of the world. Remembering that he had known Lady Dimsdale when she was Laura Langton and a girl of twenty, I told him one day, when we met him out driving, that we were expecting her here on a visit. He coloured up, on hearing the news, like any young man of five-and-twenty, a thing which I should scarcely have believed of an old ex-diplomatist like Sir Frederick, had I not seen it with my own eyes. From that moment, I became suspicious.

'Since Laura's arrival, Sir Frederick's visits to Rosemount have been much more frequent than before. That he admires her greatly, is plainly to be seen; but whether he will propose to her is quite another matter. I hope he will do nothing of the kind; or rather, I hope that if he does, she will refuse him. I feel sure that she does not care a bit for him; and he is not at all the sort of man that would be likely to make her happy. But when a woman is lonely, and feels the need of a home and a settled place in the world for the remainder of her days, one can never tell how she may act. Can either you or I tell how we should act under the same circumstances? At present, however, this is beside the question. Sir Frederick has not yet proposed.

'But during the last few hours, matters here have assumed an altogether different complexion. Last evening, there arrived at Rosemount, on a short visit, a certain Mr Oscar Boyd, a civil-engineer of some eminence, who has been out in South America for several years, engaged in laying down certain new lines of railway in that country. Captain Bowood met Mr Boyd for the first time some two months ago, at his lawyer's office in London. It appears that Mr Boyd is possessed of a small estate, which he is desirous of selling; and as the estate in question adjoins certain property belonging to my husband, it follows as a matter of course that my dear old Bow-wow is desirous of buying it. Some difficulty, however, appears to have arisen with regard to the price, or the conveyance, or something; so, in order to bring the affair to an amicable settlement and, as Jamie said, to save lawyer's expenses, Mr Boyd has been invited down here for a few days. The Captain is persuaded that if he and Mr Boyd can talk over the affair quietly between themselves, they will be able to arrive at some agreement which will be satisfactory to both; and I think it not unlikely that Jamie will prove to be right.

'But mark now what follows. When I introduced Mr Boyd to Lady Dimsdale, soon after his arrival last evening, judge my surprise to see them meet as old friends—that is to say, as friends who had known each other long ago, but who had not met for many years. A few words of explanation elicited the fact that Mr Boyd had made the acquaintance of Laura and her father during the time that he was employed as sub-engineer on the Chilwood branch-line of railway. This, of course, was after I left the neighbourhood. From the conversation that followed, I rather fancy that Mr Boyd must have

been a pretty frequent visitor at the vicarage. There's something else, too, I rather fancy—that in those old days there must have been some flirtation or *tendresse*, or something of that kind, between the two young people, the sweet fragrance of which still lingers in the memory of both of them. Of course, I may be mistaken in my idea, but I don't think I am. More than once last evening, I said to myself: "Laura is a widow, Mr Boyd is a widower, why should they not?"

But at this moment a servant flung open the door and announced: 'Sir Frederick Pinkerton.'

### SLEDGE-DOGS.

THE inestimable value of the dog, which, as Sir Charles Lyell informs us, has been the companion of man ever since the Neolithic age, is nowhere more apparent than in the countries encircling the Arctic Ocean. Besides exercising his powers in the chase, and defending his master's person and cabin from the attacks of rapacious animals, he fulfils the laborious duty of a beast of burden, performing the task with an intelligence not displayed by any other draught animal. Attempts were formerly made to utilise dogs in this capacity in various parts of Europe; and it is well known that in London and many of our provincial towns, certain breeds were once harnessed to butchers' carts, costermongers' flats, and other light conveyances, until the cruelty involved in compelling soft-footed quadrupeds to draw laden vehicles along macadamised roads was at length recognised, and the evil suppressed.

The legitimate sphere for the employment of our canine friends for the purposes of draught is undoubtedly to be found over the frozen wastes of northern latitudes, where the summer shows too brief a sun for the growth of much fodder, and the yielding snow is incapable of supporting heavier animals. Endowed with remarkable intelligence, with great powers of endurance, and with the capability of adaptation to extreme conditions of climate and various kinds of food, they seem peculiarly fitted to aid man where his existence is attended by the severest hardship. Dogs will exist and labour where other quadrupeds would perish, and their marvellous instinct often proves the means of saving life amidst the dangers which beset the inhabitants of those inhospitable regions. In Northern Siberia, Kamtchatka, Greenland, and countries of a similarly rigorous climate, they are essential alike for the transport of articles of commerce and for procuring the necessary means of subsistence. As early as 1577, Frobisher recorded the fact that Eskimo sledges were drawn by teams of dogs, and they have repeatedly proved the indispensable reliance of modern explorers.

Both the Eskimo and the Siberian sledge-dogs are large and powerful animals, and, while differing sufficiently to constitute separate varieties, they agree in bearing a close resemblance in their aspect, the tone of their howling, and in other characteristics to the wolves of the arctic circle. They stand from thirty to thirty-one and

a half inches in height at the shoulder, possess a pointed muzzle, sharp and erect ears, and a bushy tail. Their compact and shaggy coat forms an admirable protection against the cold, and is therefore much prized among the Eskimo for clothing. Their colour is variable, the Eskimo dog presenting almost all shades; but the predominating hue of this and also of the Siberian variety is gray or a dingy white.

They subsist principally on fish, walrus-hide, the flesh or the refuse of seal, and all kinds of offal. On the arctic shores of Asia, small fish, cleaned and dried in the open air, are reserved for the dogs, and form an excellent spring diet. During winter journeys, the food is usually served on alternate days, and consists of fresh frozen fish, or about two pounds of seals' flesh, or its equivalent in walrus-hide, which is often frozen like plates of iron, and has to be chopped or sawn to pieces. They are never permitted to eat salt junk, except through dire necessity, and then only sparingly, for a full meal of it would in many cases be fatal. In summer, they are turned loose to shift for themselves, and live partly on field-mice.

Before entering on long expeditions, sledge-dogs require a careful preparation, very similar to that which the plundering Turcomans give their horses. For some time beforehand, their food, exercise, and rest are strictly regulated. In the last fortnight, they are driven from seven to twenty miles daily, halting at stated intervals, until, like the Turcoman steeds, they are capable of running from seventy to a hundred English miles in a day, if the cold be not very intense and the strain of brief duration. Wrangell states that when the dogs are pursuing game, they will cover fifteen versts, and even more, in an hour, a verst equalling two-thirds of an English mile. This is confirmed by the experience of Dr Hayes, who occasionally amused an enforced leisure by taking an excursion with a team of a dozen dogs, which would traverse six miles in twenty-eight to thirty minutes. Their performances over long distances are even more surprising. On one of his return journeys, Wrangell sometimes accomplished a hundred versts per day, and maintained a mean daily speed of thirty-four miles over a distance of two hundred and fifty leagues, despite the fact that the dogs went several days without food, the stone-foxes and wolverines having destroyed the provision depôts. Dr Kane's team, although worn by previous travel, carried him, with a fully burdened sledge, between seven and eight hundred miles in a fortnight, at the astonishing average rate of fifty-seven miles per day!

When subjected to severe and protracted exertion, the dogs are liable to become footsore. They should then be protected by fur-boots, the paws being washed frequently in strong brandy, and if the weather be sufficiently mild, bathed in sea-water. A similar foot-covering is necessary when the snow is frozen into hard crystals, which cut the feet; or when a team is driven rapidly over sea-ice formed at a low temperature, which, besides cutting the paws, occasions acute pain from the brine expressed, sometimes even causing the animals to fall down in fits. When the cold is unusually severe, the dogs require clothing for the body.

Living almost entirely in the open air, these useful assistants give their masters little trouble in the provision of kennels. During summer, they scratch holes in the ground for coolness, or lie in water to escape mosquitoes. In winter, when the thermometer is exceptionally low, they are occasionally sheltered in an outhouse adjoining the cabin; but even then are more frequently tethered outside, and curl themselves up in their burrows in the snow. For the comfort of the dogs attached to the *Fox*, while engaged in the search for Sir John Franklin, some twenty-five holes were excavated in the face of a snow-bank alongside the vessel, and 'in them they spent most of their time. Under the lee of the ship, they could, when their fur was thick, lie out on the snow without apparent inconvenience, although the temperature was minus forty degrees, and the mists gave a raw and keen edge to the cutting blasts.' Dr Kane erected a doghouse on Butler's Island; but the animals would not sleep away from the vessel, preferring the bare snow within sound of human voices to a warm kennel on the rocks. Wrangell says that they relieve their solitary watches and interrupt the arctic silence with periodical howling, which is audible at a long distance, and recurs as a rule at intervals of six or eight hours, but far more frequently when the moon shines.

The *narti* or sledge of Northern Siberia is nearly two yards long, about twenty-one inches broad, and ten high. The best are built of seasoned birchwood, free from knots, except the bed, which is formed of woven shoots of the sand-willow. No iron is used in the construction, all the parts being bound together by thongs cut from the skin of the elk, ox, or walrus, of which a great number are required. Eskimo sledges vary considerably both in form and material, and are from four to fourteen feet in length; an ordinary specimen measures ten or twelve feet, and weighs upwards of two hundred pounds. A large party of Eskimo who once visited Dr Kane arrived in sledges 'made of small fragments of porous bone, very skillfully fastened together by thongs of hide; the runners, which shone like silver, were of highly polished ivory, obtained from the tusks of the walrus.' One of Dr Kane's sledges, named 'Little Willie,' was constructed of American hickory, thoroughly seasoned, and well adapted for strength, lightness, and a minimum amount of friction. Another, styled the 'Faith,' which was built in a stronger fashion, after models furnished by the British Admiralty, measured thirteen feet long, and four broad, and would carry fourteen hundredweight of mixed stores. The natives moisten the soles of the runners with water, often obtained by dissolving snow in the mouth, which insures a thin shield of ice that glides over a frozen surface with incredible ease.

When the sledge is laden, the whole is covered by thin sheets of deerskin, so as to prevent displacement of the load by the rapid speed or the frequent overthrows. Under favourable circumstances, a team will draw from a thousand to twelve hundred and sixty pounds, or from nine to eleven and a quarter hundredweight, in addition to the driver, at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour; but during intense frost, when the snow is rendered granular, and 'almost as gritty as

sand,' the load may have to be limited to three hundred and sixty pounds.

A good team consists of about twelve dogs. Their harness is composed of bearskin, and when tethered, it is by bear or seal skin traces fastened to spears plunged into the ice. The foremost sledge is furnished with an additional dog to act as leader, which receives a careful training, for on him the safety of the whole party frequently depends. If reliable, no difficulty turns him aside, but he selects the track which presents the least danger. On dark nights, or when the wild waste is obscured by a tempest, an impenetrable mist, or a blinding snowstorm, and the sheltering *powarna* is scarcely discoverable by man, a good leader will be sure to find it, if he has ever crossed the plain before, or once rested at the habitation; while, if the hut be buried in snow, he will indicate the spot where his master must dig. When successfully trained, he rarely runs astray on scenting game; and often excites the admiration of travellers by his persistent efforts to keep the rest of the team to their work, barking and wheeling round at intervals, as if he had come upon a new scent, in order to induce them to follow him. If the leader swerves from duty, the driver not unfrequently finds himself powerless on such occasions to prevent them from rushing madly off in pursuit of prey.

At all times, the task of driving these half-tamed wolfish dogs is one of considerable difficulty, requiring both skill and determination. The sleighman seats himself on one side of the sledge, with his feet on the runner, and must be ready to spring off at any moment when his safety may be imperilled, or to dig his heels into the snow, if the fierce and unruly animals refuse to stop when they are required. A long staff, furnished with iron at one end and bells at the other, serves the double purpose of assisting him to maintain his precarious seat on the rocking sledge, and aids his voice in giving animation to the team by the tinnabulation of the bells. A far more formidable instrument is the driver's whip. The lash measures twenty feet in length, or four feet more than the traces, and is made of raw seal or walrus hide, tipped with a 'cracker' of hard sinew. Attached to a light stock only two and a half feet long, no little practice is necessary to roll such a lash out to its full length, and when blown in all directions by an arctic gale, will tax the powers of the most experienced hand.

But sledge-dogs need no urging with the whip when their instinct informs them that they are on unsafe ice. They flee onwards at the speed which alone can save, and, as was experienced repeatedly by Dr Hayes, instead of keeping the sledges together in a compact body, they diverge and separate, so as to distribute the weight over as large an area as possible. When they begin to find themselves menaced by this danger, and the prospect ahead appears to them unusually threatening, 'they tremble, lie down, and refuse to go further.' Most arctic explorers tell of hairbreadth escapes from treacherous ice, when they have owed their preservation to the sagacity of their dogs. Wrangell relates an incident of this nature: 'Our first care was to examine the possibility of further advance; this, however, could only be done by trusting to the thin ice of the channel; and opinions were divided as to the possibility of

its bearing us. I determined to try; and the adventure succeeded better than could have been hoped for, owing to the incredibly swift running of the dogs, to which doubtless we owed our safety. The leading sledge actually broke through in several places; but the dogs, warned, no doubt, of the danger by their natural instinct, and animated by the incessant cries and encouragement of the driver, flew so rapidly over the yielding ice, that we reached the other side without actually sinking through. The other three sledges followed with similar rapidity, each across such part as appeared to be the most promising; and we were now all assembled in safety on the north side of the fissure. It was necessary to halt for a time, to allow the dogs to recover a little from their extraordinary exertions.'

Some authorities, including Dr Hayes, pronounce these dogs to be insensible to kindness; but the assertion has been stoutly disputed. The fact appears to be that sledge-dogs, like all others, bark as they are bred, or, in other words, are what their masters make them. When they receive humane treatment, instead of the systematic and revolting brutality which is too commonly their portion, they rarely fail to evince a warm attachment to those with whom they are associated. 'Daddy,' the Eskimo dog which served for three years in the search for Sir John Franklin, 'won all hearts by his winning manner both afloat and ashore.' A lithograph of this cherished animal is preserved in the British Museum. Similar testimony in proof of the friendly and often affectionate disposition of these dogs, when properly treated, is borne by various explorers.

No greater calamity could befall the inhabitants of such regions than to be deprived of the services of the dog. To avert such a disaster, human mothers will nurse pups with their own offspring, if, through the death of the natural mother, there appear danger of the family being left without the preserving dog. It was once proposed in Northern Siberia to prohibit the keeping of dogs, because their large consumption of food was believed to lessen the quantity available for the inhabitants; but the enforcement of such a prohibition would have robbed the people of one of their chief means of subsistence.

The reindeer may be turned to a greater variety of uses than the dog, but, on the other hand, is more difficult to maintain. Over immense tracts of country, almost all articles of food and of commerce, together with the abundant supplies of fuel and oil necessary to impart warmth, light, and cheerfulness to the hovels in which the inhabitants seek refuge from their inconceivably severe and sunless winters, are obtained by the help of dogs. They convey their masters to and from fishing-grounds more distant than could otherwise be visited. They discover the lurking-places of the wary seal. Harnessed to light sledges, and guided by keenness of scent, or by visible traces on the freshly fallen snow, they fly over hummock and hollow in pursuit of the elk, the reindeer, the fox, sable, squirrel, the wild-sheep, and the bear, thus bringing hunters within reach alike of the fleetest, the craftiest, and the most formidable prey. In a word, the dog is as indispensable to the settled inhabitants



of such climes, as the reindeer is to the nomad tribes, as the horse is in England, the sure-footed mule on the mountain-paths of Spain, the llama on those of South America, or as the camel in the sandy deserts of Africa and Arabia.

### A KING OF ACRES.

BY RICHARD JEFFERIES, AUTHOR OF THE 'GAME-KEEPER AT HOME,' ETC.

L.—JAMES THARDOVER.

A WEATHER-BEATEN man stood by a gateway watching some teams at plough. The bleak March wind rushed across the field, reddening his face; rougher than a flesh-brush, it rubbed the skin, and gave it a glow as if each puff were a blow with the 'gloves.' His short brown beard was full of dust blown into it. Between the line of the hat and the exposed part of the forehead, the skin had peeled slightly, literally worn off by the unsparing rudeness of wintry mornings. Like the early field veronica, which flowered at his feet in the short grass under the hedge, his eyes were blue and gray. The petals are partly of either hue, and so his eyes varied according to the light—now somewhat more gray, and now more blue. Tall and upright, he stood straight as a bolt, though both arms were on the gate and his ashen walking-stick swung over it. He wore a gray overcoat, a gray felt hat, gray leggings, and his boots were gray with the dust which had settled on them.

He was thinking: 'Farmer Bartholomew is doing the place better this year; he scarcely hoe'd a weed last season; the stubble was a tangle of weeds; one could hardly walk across it. That second team stops too long at the end of the furrow—idle fellow that. Third team goes too fast; horses will be soon tired. Fourth team—he's getting beyond his work—too old; the stilts nearly threw him over there. This ground has paid for the draining—one, at all events. Never saw land look better. Looks brownish and moist; moist brownish red. Query, what colour is that? Ask Mary—the artist. Never saw it in a picture. Keeps his hedges well; this one is like a board on the top, thorn-boughs molten together; a hare could run along it (as they will sometimes with harriers behind them, and jump off the other side to baffle scent). Now, why is Bartholomew doing his land better this year? Keen old fellow. Something behind this. Has he got that bit of money that was coming to him? Done something, they said, last Doncaster; no one could get anything out of him. Dark as night. Sold the trainer some oats; that I know; wonder how much the trainer pocketed over that transaction? Expect he did not charge them all. Still, he's a decent fellow. Honesty is uncertain—never met an honest man. Doubt if world could hang together. Bartholomew is honest enough; but either he has won some money, or he really does not want the drawback at audit. Takes care his horses don't look too well. Notice myself that farmers do not let their teams look so glossy as a few years

ago. Like them to seem rough and uncared for—can't afford smooth coats, these hard times. Don't look very glossy myself; don't feel very glossy. Hate this wind—hang kings' ransoms. People who like these winds are telling falsehoods. That's broken' (as one of the teams stopped); 'have to send to blacksmith; knock off now; no good your pottering there. Next team stops to go and help potter. Third team stops to help second. Fourth team comes across to help third. All pottering. Wants Bartholomew among them. That's the way to do a morning's work. Did any one ever see such idleness! Group about a broken chain—link snapped. Tie it up with your leathern garter—not he; no resource. What patience a man needs, to have anything to do with land. Four teams idle over a snapped link. Rent!—of course they can't pay rent. Wonder if a gang of American labourers could make anything out of our farms? There they work from sunrise to sunset. Suppose import a gang and try. Did any one ever see such a helpless set as that yonder! Depression—of course. No go-ahead in them.'

'Mind opening the gate, you?' said a voice behind; and turning, the thinker saw a dealer in a trap, who wanted the gate opened, to save him the trouble of getting down to do it himself. The thinker did as he was asked, and held the gate open. The trap went slowly through.

'Will you come on and take a glass?' said the dealer, pointing with the butt-end of his whip. 'Crown.' This was sententious for the *Crown* in the hamlet; country-folk speak in pieces, putting the principal word in a sentence for the entire paragraph.

The thinker shook his head and shut the gate, carefully hasping it. The dealer drove on.

'Who's that?' thought the gray man, watching the trap jolt down the rough road. 'Wants veal, I suppose; no veal here, no good.—Now, look!'

The group by the broken chain beckoned to the trap; a lad went across to it with the chain, got up, and was driven off, so saving himself half a mile on his road to the forge.

'Anything to save themselves exertion. Nothing will make them move faster—like whipping a carthorse into a gallop; it soon dies away in the old jog-trot. Why—they have actually started again! actually started!'

He watched the teams a little longer, heedless of the wind, which he abused, but which really did not affect him, and then walked along the hedgerow down hill. Two men were sowing a field on the slope, swinging the hand full of grain from the hip regular as time itself, a swing calculated to throw the seed so far, but not too far, and without jerk. The next field had just been manured, and he stopped to glance at the crowds of small birds which were looking over the straw—finches and sparrows, and the bluish gray of pied wagtails. There were hundreds of small birds. While he stood, a hedge-sparrow uttered his thin pleading song on the hedge-top, and a meadow-pipit which had mounted a little way in the air, came down with outspread wings with a short 'Seep, seep,' to the ground. Lark and pipit seem near relations; only the skylark sings rising, descending, anywhere; but the pipits chiefly while slowly descending. There had been a

rough attempt at market-gardening in the field after this, and rows of cabbage gone up to seed stood forlorn and ragged. On the top of one of these, a skylark was perched, calling at intervals; for though classed as a non-percher, perch he does sometimes. Meadows succeeded on the level ground—one had been covered with the scrapings of roads, a whitish, crumbling dirt, dry and falling to pieces in the wind. The grass was pale, its wintry hue not yet gone, and the clods seemed to make it appear paler. Among these clods, four or five thrushes were seeking their food; on a bare oak, a blackbird was perched, his mate no doubt close by in the hedgerow; at the margin of a pond, a black-and-white wagtail waded in the water; a blue tit flew across to the corner. Brown thrushes, dark blackbird, blue tit, and wagtail, gave a little colour to the angle of the meadow. A gleam of passing sunlight brightened it. Two wood-pigeons came to a thick bush growing over a gray wall on the other side; for ivy-berries, probably.

A cart passed at a little distance, laden with red mangolds, fresh from the pit in which they had been stored; the roots had grown out a trifle, and the rootlets were mauve. A goldfinch perched on a dry dead stalk of wild carrot, a stalk that looked too slender to bear the bird. As the weather-beaten man moved, the goldfinch flew, and the golden wings outspread formed a bright contrast with the dull white clods. Crossing the meadow, and startling the wood-pigeons, our friend scaled the gray wall, putting his foot in a hole left for the purpose. Dark moss lined the interstices between the irregular and loosely placed stones. Above, on the bank, and greener than the grass, grew moss at the roots of ash-stoles and wherever there was shelter. Broad rank green arum leaves crowded each other in places. Red stalks of herb-Robert spread open. The weather-beaten man gathered a white wild violet from the shelter of a dead dry oak-leaf, and as he placed it in his button-hole, paused to listen to the baying of hounds. Yowp! yow! The cries echoed from the bank and filled the narrow beechwood within. A shot followed, and then another, and a third after an interval. More yowping. The gray-brown head of a rabbit suddenly appeared over the top of the bank, within three yards of him, and he could see the creature's whiskers nervously working, as its mind estimated its chances of escape. Instead of turning back, the rabbit made a rush to get under an ash-stole where was a burrow. The yowping went slowly away; the beeches rang again as if the beagles were in cry. Two assistant-keepers were working the outskirts, and shooting the rabbits which sat out in the brushwood, and so were not to be captured by nets and ferrets. The ground-game was strictly kept down; the noise was made by half-a-dozen puppies they had with them. Passing through the ash-stoles, and next the narrow beechwood, the gray man walked across the open park, and after awhile came in sight of Thardover House. His steps were directed to the great arched porch, beneath which the village-folk boasted a waggon-load could pass. The inner door swung open as if by instinct at his approach. The man who had so neighbourly opened the gate to the dealer in the trap was James Thardover, the owner of the property.

Historic as was his name and residence, he was utterly devoid of affectation; a true man of the land.

## II.—NEW TITLE-DEEDS.

Deed, seal, and charter give but a feeble hold compared with that which is afforded by labour. James Thardover held his lands again by right of labour; he had taken possession of them once more with thought, design, and actual work, as his ancestors had with the sword. He had laid hands, as it were, on every acre. Those who work, own. There are many who receive rent who do not own; they are proprietors, not owners; like receiving dividends on stock, which stock is never seen or handled. Their rights are legal only; his right was the right of labour, and it might be added, of forbearance. It is a condition of ownership in the United States that the settler clears so much and brings so many acres into cultivation. It was just this condition which he had practically carried out upon the Thardover estate. He had done so much, and in so varied a manner, that it is difficult to select particular acts for enumeration. All the great agricultural movements of the last thirty years he had energetically supported. There was the draining movement. The undulating contour of the country, deep vales alternating with moderate brows, gave a sufficient supply of water to every farm, and on the lower lands led to flooding and the formation of marshes. Horley Bottom, where the hay used to be frequently carried into the river by a June freshet, was now safe from flood. Flag Marsh had been completely drained, and made some of the best wheat-land in the neighbourhood. Part of a bark canoe was found in it; the remnants were preserved at Thardover House, but gradually fell to pieces.

Longboro' Farm was as dry now as any such soil could be. More or less draining had been carried out on twenty other farms, sometimes entirely at his expense; sometimes the tenant paid a small percentage on the sum expended; generally this percentage fell off in the course of a year or two. The tenant found that he could not pay it. Except on Flag Marsh, the drainage did not pay him fifty pounds. Perhaps it might have done, had the seasons been better; but, as it had actually happened, the rents had decreased instead of increasing. Tile-pipes had not availed against rain and American wheat. So far as income was concerned, he would have been richer had the money so expended been allowed to accumulate at the banker's. The land as land was certainly improved in places, as on Bartholomew's farm. Thardover never cared for the steam-plough; personally, he disliked it. Those who represented agricultural opinion at the farmers' clubs and in the agricultural papers, raised so loud a cry for it, that he went halfway to meet them. One of the large tenants was encouraged to invest in the steam-plough by a drawback on his rent, on condition that it should be hired out to others. The steam-plough, Thardover soon discovered, was not profitable to the landowner. It reduced the fields to a dead level; they had previously been thrown into 'lands,' with a drain-trench on each side. On this dead level, water did not run off quickly, and the growth of weeds increased. Tenants got into a

habit of shirking the extirpation of the weeds. The best farmers on the estate would not use it at all. To very large tenants, and to small tenants who could not keep enough horses, it was profitable at times. It did not appear that a single sack more of wheat was raised, nor a single additional head of stock maintained, since the steam-plough arrived.

Paul of Embersbury, who occupied some of the best meadow and upland country, a man of some character and standing, had taken to the shorthorns before Thardover succeeded to the property. Thardover assisted him in every way, and bought some of the best blood. There was no home-farm; the House was supplied from Bartholomew's dairy, and the Squire did not care to upset the old traditional arrangements by taking a farm in hand. What he bought went to Embersbury, and Paul did well. As a consequence, there were good cattle all over the estate. The long prices formerly fetched by Paul's method had much fallen off; but substantial sums were still paid. Paul had faced the depression better than most of them. He was bitter, as was only natural, against the reaction in favour of black-cattle. The upland tenants, though, had a good many of the black, despite of Paul's frowns and thunders after the market ordinary at Barnboro' town. He would put down his pipe, bustle upon his feet, lean his somewhat protuberant person on the American leather of the table, and address the dozen or so who stayed for spirits-and-water after dinner, without the pretence of a formal meeting. He spoke in very fair language, short, jerky sentences, but well-chosen words. He who had taken the van in improvements thirty years ago, was the bitterest against any proposed change now. Black-cattle were thoroughly bad.

Another of his topics was the hiring-fair, where servant-girls stood waiting for engagements, and which it was proposed to abolish. Paul considered it was taking the bread-and-cheese out of the poor wenches' mouths. They could stand there and get hired for nothing, instead of having to pay half-a-crown for advertising, and get nothing then. But though the Squire had supported the shorthorns, even the shorthorns had not prevented the downward course things agricultural were following.

Then there was the scientific movement, the cry for science among the farmers. He founded a scholarship, invited the professors to his place, lunched them, let them experiment on little pieces of land, mournful-looking plots. Nothing came of it. He drew a design for a new cottage himself, a practical plain place; the builders told him it was far dearer to put up than ornamental but inconvenient structures. Thardover sunk his money his own way, and very comfortable cottages they were. Ground-game he had kept down for years before the Act. Farm-buildings he had improved freely. The education movement, however, stirred him most. He went into it enthusiastically. Thardover village was one of the first places to become efficient under the new legislation. This was a piece of practical work after his own heart. Generally, legislative measures were so far off from country-people. They affected the condition of

large towns, of the Black Country, of the weavers or miners, distant folk. To the villages and hamlets of purely agricultural districts these Acts had no existence. The Education Act was just the reverse. This was a statute which came right down into the hamlets, which was nailed up at the crossroads, and ruled the barn, the plough, and scythe. Something tangible, that could be carried out and made into a fact; something he could do. Thardover did it with the thoroughness of his nature. He found the ground, lent the money, saw to the building, met the government inspectors, and organised the whole. A Committee of the tenants were the ostensible authority, the motive-power was the Squire. He worked at it till it was completely organised, for he felt as if he were helping to mould the future of this great country. Broad-minded himself, he understood the immense value of education, looked at generally; and he thought, too, that by its aid the farmer and the landowner might be enabled to compete with the foreigner, who was driving them from the market. No speeches and no agitation could equal the power concentrated in that plain school-house; there was nothing from which he hoped so much.

Only one held aloof and showed hostility to the movement, or rather to the form it took. His youngest and favourite daughter, Mary, the artist, rebelled against it. Hitherto, she had ruled him as she chose. She had led in every kind act; acts too kind to be called charity; she had been the life of the place. Perhaps it was the strong-minded women whom the cry of education brought to Thardover House, that set ajar some chord in her sensitive mind. Strident voices checked her sympathies, and hard rule-and-line work like this repelled her. Till then, she had been the constant companion of the Squire's walks; but while the school was being organised, she would not go with him. She walked where she could not see the plain angular building; she said it set her teeth on edge.

When the strident voices had departed, when time had made the school-house part and parcel of the place, like the cottages, Mary changed her ways, and occasionally called there. She took a class once a week of the elder girls, and taught them in her own fashion at home—most unorthodox teaching, it was—in which the works of the best poets were the chief subjects, and portfolios of engravings were found on the table. Long since, father and daughter had resumed their walks together.

It was in this way that James Thardover made his estate his own—he held possession by right of labour. He was resident ten months out of twelve; and after all these public and open works, he did far more in private. There was not an acre on the property which he had not personally visited. The farmhouses and farm-buildings were all known to him. He rode from tenancy to tenancy, he visited the men at plough and stood among the reapers. Neither the summer heat nor the winds of March prevented him from seeing with his own eyes. The latest movement was the silo-system, the burying of grass under pressure, instead of making it into hay. By these means, the clouds are to be defied, and a plentiful supply of fodder secured. Time alone can show whether this, the latest invention,



is any more powerful than steam-plough or guano to uphold agriculture against the shocks of fortune. But James Thardover would have tried any plan that had been suggested to him. It was thus that he laid hold on his lands with the strongest of titles, the work of his own hands. Yet still the tenants were unable to pay the former rent; some had failed or left, and their farms were vacant; and nothing could be more discouraging than the condition of affairs upon the property.

#### AN ORDER OF MERCY.

It has from time to time fallen to our lot to point out efforts, both good and bad, for the relief of suffering; and whilst we never shrink from deprecating the so-called charity which enfeebles and harms its recipients, it is with genuine pleasure that we draw attention to schemes of real utility and helpfulness. Of the last-named order, we can confidently affirm, is the St John Ambulance Association, the working of which it is the object of the present paper to explain. The Association was founded in England in 1877, under the auspices of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, and has for its object the spread of such elementary knowledge as may tend to decrease avoidable suffering in cases of accident or injury. Many have known by sad experience the helplessness of bystanders, say in an ordinary street-accident, and have seen how, with the best will in the world, the power to aid the sufferer was utterly wanting, and he has had to be left to his fate till medical help could be procured. Alas! it not seldom happens that by the time help arrives, there is no longer scope for the doctor's skill, and so many a life has been lost for want of the knowledge of how to administer prompt measures for relief.

As an instance of successful unprofessional help, take the following case of a man who was seen by a policeman to fall against an iron railing with such force as to completely sever an artery. The policeman, a pupil of one of the St John Ambulance classes, so cleverly extemporised a compress and bandages that the bleeding was entirely arrested. On the temporary appliance being removed at one of the London hospitals, the hemorrhage returned with so much violence, that the surgeon in attendance declared that nothing but the prompt aid rendered by the policeman could have averted speedy death.

But even when the accident is not so serious as to involve the question of life or death, much needless suffering is often caused by the roughness or carelessness of unskilled handling, and recovery is in consequence greatly retarded. The following instance, both of this and of the advantages of skilled assistance, is taken from the Register of the Association. It is the case of a carter who had his leg broken by a fall whilst at work and at a distance from medical help. Two successful candidates of an ambulance class extemporised splints, bandages, and a stretcher, and conveyed the wounded man to a doctor's house. As a consequence of the injured limb having been properly supported, the patient was able to get out of bed in three weeks' time, and in less than two months was walking about with ease. Five years previously he had

met with a similar accident under corresponding circumstances: but no skilled help being at hand, he was conveyed home somewhat roughly, a proceeding which revenged itself by sixteen weeks of helplessness and suffering.

Such cases are of daily, almost hourly occurrence in our large towns, whilst in mining or manufacturing districts, the risks to life and limb are even more serious and frequent; so that any agency which provides the needed help to such sufferers cannot but be looked upon as a boon to humanity. Now, it is just this first prompt aid that the Association seeks, through its pupils, to place within the reach of all those who are overtaken by sudden accident or injury; and in order to disseminate the necessary knowledge, classes for instruction are held wherever the requisite number—twenty to thirty—of pupils are found willing to prepare themselves to be in readiness to give help in case of need. The course of instruction is limited to a series of five lectures, according to a syllabus drawn up by a Committee of medical men of eminence. It consists of a general slight outline of the structure and functions of the human body, including particular notice of the principal arteries and of the different forms of hemorrhage, with the various extemporary means for its arrest, including the use of bandages. Fractured bones also receive a considerable share of attention. The fourth lecture is devoted to the consideration of insensible patients, the treatment of the apparently drowned, and of the victims to burns, scalds, and various smaller ills. So far, the instruction is the same for male and female pupils; but in the last lecture the lines diverge; and whilst women receive some hints on home-nursing, men are instructed as to the best methods of lifting and carrying the sick and injured, with or without stretchers. The last half-hour of each lesson is devoted to practice by the pupils of such arts as the application of splints and bandages, and the conveying from place to place of patients *pro tem*.

For ladies' classes, a small boy is hired as dummy, and is put through such a series of possible accidents as ought to sober the most reckless of mortals into a cautious habit of life. The sight of a group of eager watchers for a vacant limb is decidedly entertaining; and it is curious to notice the contrast between the utter want of comprehension of some aspirants, and the quickness with which other deft fingers carry out an idea once grasped.

Pupils who pass an examination, partly written and partly practical, which is held at the end of each course of lectures, are presented with certificates of proficiency; and for women only, there is a second course of instruction in the elements of hygiene and home-nursing.

A record, well worth studying, is kept by the Association of cases successfully treated by its pupils; and a list is also kept of those holding certificates who would be willing to join an ambulance train in case of war.

It need scarcely be said that the work of the Association in no sense seeks to supersede or interfere with the doctor's help; and it is pleasing to find that in no case has complaint been made of over-officiousness or presumption on the part of any one pupil. Indeed, the little knowledge so conveyed would be more likely to have a

contrary effect, and to make the amateur pause and consider, before venturing to trifle with such a wonderful and intricate piece of mechanism as the human body. Few of us are without at least one 'friend' who is ready at a moment's notice to prescribe some quack remedy, from the deadly poison of soothing sirup, to the comparatively harmless 'globule' of the homeopathist, and to do so with an air of profound conviction, even in cases where the doctor of learning and experience hesitates to give an opinion.

Now, anything that would tend to foster ignorant presumption is carefully avoided in the ambulance class, the instructor and examiner of which are invariably medical men; and only that amount of knowledge is imparted which will enable pupils to give help of the *right kind*, until the doctor arrives. Pupils in a position to do so, pay a small fee; but as the work of the Association increases rapidly amongst miners, colliers, railway-porters, policemen, and others, who cannot afford to contribute towards the necessary working expenses, whilst they constitute just the class to whom instruction is most valuable, increased support from those who have it in their power to give is very greatly needed; and as the work is undertaken, in great part, as a labour of love, donors may have the satisfaction of feeling that their gifts go directly towards the formation of new centres of usefulness.

In order to complete the work of the Association, a varied stock of *matériel* has been prepared and widely distributed by means of the Store Department. Of the first Handbook prepared for the use of classes, no fewer than fifty thousand copies have been issued, as well as a large number of special Manuals for the advanced or nursing class. It was also found necessary to supply the classes with diagrams for the use of lecturers, and with an assortment of such articles as bandages, splints, &c. The Association has also prepared a small portable hamper in a waterproof case, fitted with those 'First Aid' appliances, the use of which is taught in the classes. Much time and thought has been expended on the production of a stretcher at once light, easily managed, and comfortable; the result has been a small vehicle known as the 'Ashford' litter, consisting of a covered stretcher moving on two wheels, which can in ordinary cases be managed by one person. Such a hamper and litter have, during the past year, been placed in two lodges of Hyde Park; and it needs little prophetic insight to predict that in a short time our public buildings will boast a supply of the wherewithal for dealing with cases of accident or emergency.

The latest idea, which awaits full organisation, is the formation of Ambulance Corps for the transport of sick (non-infectious cases) and injured in large towns, where the distance is of necessity great. In London, there are no proper arrangements for the removal of the infirm, the few vehicles to be had being unsuitable for the purpose and costly to hire; facts which show the need of help, such as an organised Ambulance Corps would be able to give at a moment's notice.

Some idea may be formed of the spread of the Association's work by the fact that during the past year twenty-five thousand men and women have received instruction in London and the

provinces. Of these, eight thousand have successfully passed examinations and have received certificates of proficiency. There are at present ten centres of work in London, and about one hundred and forty in the country; and in addition, the idea has taken root and is spreading in the principal countries of Europe and in all our colonies. But cheering as has been the progress, the promoters of this scheme look forward to still better things in the future, and hopefully anticipate the time when avoidable suffering shall be reduced to a minimum, through a widespread knowledge of the elements of helpfulness.

Any further information respecting the working of the Association and the formation of new classes can be obtained on application to the chief secretary, Captain Perrott, St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, London.

## TWO SONNETS.

### LOVE'S WATCH.

FAIR falls the dawn upon thy face, O sea!  
And from thy furrows, crested white with foam,  
The gray mist brightens, and the hollow dome  
Of pearly cloud slow-reddens over thee:  
The glee of birds with snowy sun-kissed wings  
Cheerily wakes along thy tremulous waves,  
And blent with echoes of far distant caves,  
Thine own wild voice a deep-toned matin sings.

Eastward, the line of jagged reefs is bright  
With sunshine and white dashings of thy spray;  
And laughing blithely in the golden light,  
The fretted surf runs rippling up the bay;  
Westward, from night—O bear it safe, fair sea!—  
Slow sails the ship with freighted love to me.

### LOVE'S TRANSFIGURATION.

O strange sweet loveliness! O tender grace,  
That in the light of passion's day-spring threw  
Soft splendour on a fair familiar face,  
Changing it, yet unchanged, and old, yet new!  
Perfect the portrait in my heart, and true,  
Which traced the smile about that flower-like mouth,  
And those gray eyes with just a doubt of blue,  
Yet darkened with the passion of the South,  
And the white arch of thoughtful forehead, crowned  
With meeting waves of hair:—but still I found  
Some undreamt light of tenderness that fell  
From the new dawn, and made more fair to see  
What was so fair, that now no song can tell  
How lovely seemed thy heart-lit face to me.

GEORGE LOGAN MOORE, A.R.

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